



# Total Immersion – The Goal of Interactive Gaming

23rd July 2010 *Blooloop talks to Ariel Almos, CEO and Founder of EyeClick*

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The launch of the Nintendo Wii in 2007 has revolutionised the market for gaming, broadening the demographic from the stereotypical adolescent boy in his bedroom to just about anyone who can wave a remote or step on a balance board. The easy access and social play elements of the Wii appeal to a wide audience, encouraging parents and grandparents to join in games with their children. Indeed one of the most unlikely new casual gamers is perhaps the Queen who was reported to be a natural at bowling by The People and to have “become hooked on Prince William's new Nintendo Wii games console” during Christmas 2007.

Whilst stalwart gamers bemoan the efforts of the industry to prise them from their gaming chairs, the spread of interactive gaming into every home is set to continue relentlessly with the launch of the X-Box Kinetic later in 2010. Since 2004, the percentage of households owning a video game console has increased from 1/3 to 60%\*. The digital world even appears to be taking time away from real world socialization with the average American spending 30% less time attending or hosting social events in 2009 compared to 2003\*.

As technology leaps ahead for home-based entertainment, out of home entertainment venues are challenged to compete with the ever more immersive experience that can be accessed in the home. Whilst larger venues can commit capital to expensive high tech attractions that cannot be replicated at home, smaller local attractions are struggling to compete, evidenced by a 13% decrease on out-of-home entertainment spending near the home\*.

## **Blooloop caught up with Ariel Almos, CEO and Founder of EyeClick, to talk about developments in interactive technology and the applications for the Attractions Industry.**

 **ariel amos, eyeclick, gaming interactive** *What are the milestones in the development of interactive technology in the gaming industry?*

Today, interactive technology is not altogether groundbreaking in the gaming industry. Nearly 4 years ago, Nintendo debuted the Wii consol which has now sold over 70 million units worldwide. Notable features such as the Wii Remote and Wii Balance Board broadened Nintendo's demographic by allowing for physical participation while in the comfort of one's home. In late 2010, Nintendo competitors will be rolling out new technology to create an even more natural and seamless immersion. Sony's Playstation Move will attempt to improve on Wii's Remote using more attuned sensors and a sleeker design. New for in-home gaming will be Microsoft's Kinect, a controller free experience enabled by players' gestures and spoken commands.

### ***How has interactive gaming been developed for out of home entertainment?***

Interactive gaming has not only been developed for in-home consoles. For years, arcades thrilled gamers as they sat behind the wheel of a virtual car race, shot up mobsters with plastic guns, and showed off their moves on the Dance Dance Revolution disco floor. Certainly today, technological advances in motion detection have redefined the interactive hardware, but the goal of total immersion remains the same.

### ***How has EyeClick adapted gaming technology to create products for the Attractions Industry?***

EyeClick's platforms merge the wow effect of arcade games with the aforementioned motion detection hardware. With EyePlay, the games are projected onto the floor and players' presence and gestures are registered allowing them to score a virtual soccer goal, play the piano with their feet, or pop floating balloons.

The main advantage of this projector-based gaming platform is that out-of-home locations can easily add a unique and entertaining element to their site. It only requires an empty section of floor space and is virtually tamperproof. These games can be safely enjoyed even by very small children unlike many amusement park rides. This platform is also appealing to clients as they can customize the graphics and content to reflect any brand, theme, or atmosphere they have in mind. Typical at-home gaming consoles do not offer this level of creativity and personalization.

### ***How do the platforms work?***

With EyePlay, the interactive floor projection can transform any floor surface into an interactive platform. An image is projected from above onto the floor. A camera and infra-red light source are mounted to capture the players movements and inform the system when people walk over the interactive floor projection. The interactive floor then responds by changing the projected graphic content accordingly.

EyeTouch is an interactive window projection system that displays graphics and can detect users touching the screen externally as well as people passing by from a distance. All applications can be run on this platform, from simple web pages to custom built 3D applications. This interactive window projection system includes an interactive foil kit that is applied on to the substrate. Combined with a camera and infra-red light source, the users' presence, touch or gestures are detected. The interactive window then responds by changing the projected graphic content accordingly.

 **eyeclick game moon walk** *Have these been used in educational applications?*



EyeClick has designed educational displays for NASA's Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex, Amazing Chicago's Funhouse Maze and the Beatles Story Visitor Attraction in Liverpool.

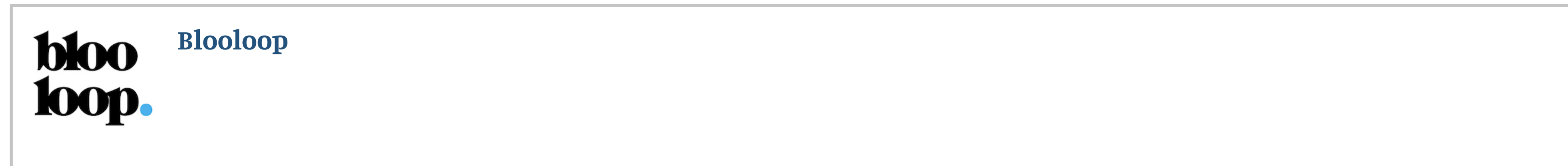
NASA Kennedy Space Center for Education has installed a system by EyeClick which is both educational and fun. Students are empowered to navigate their space ship and even leave footprints on the moon!

***X-Box Kinetic, previewed at the E3 Expo in June, looks pretty amazing in terms of the advancement in motion sensing and voice recognition that allow Kinetic to recognise and respond to the individuals voice and body, bypassing the need for a controller. There is speculation that soon platforms will be able to recognise emotions by "reading" the players' faces. What do you see for the future?***

With the evolution of technology, more powerful tools of immersion are sure to be developed. Subtle motion detection advancements to dazzling 3D effects are likely to be in the works, but one thing is for sure: there is a new face on gaming. The demographic is broader, the games more intuitive, and the technology more exciting than ever.

**The modern gamer need not do thumb exercises – interactive platforms have brought gaming to the next level.**

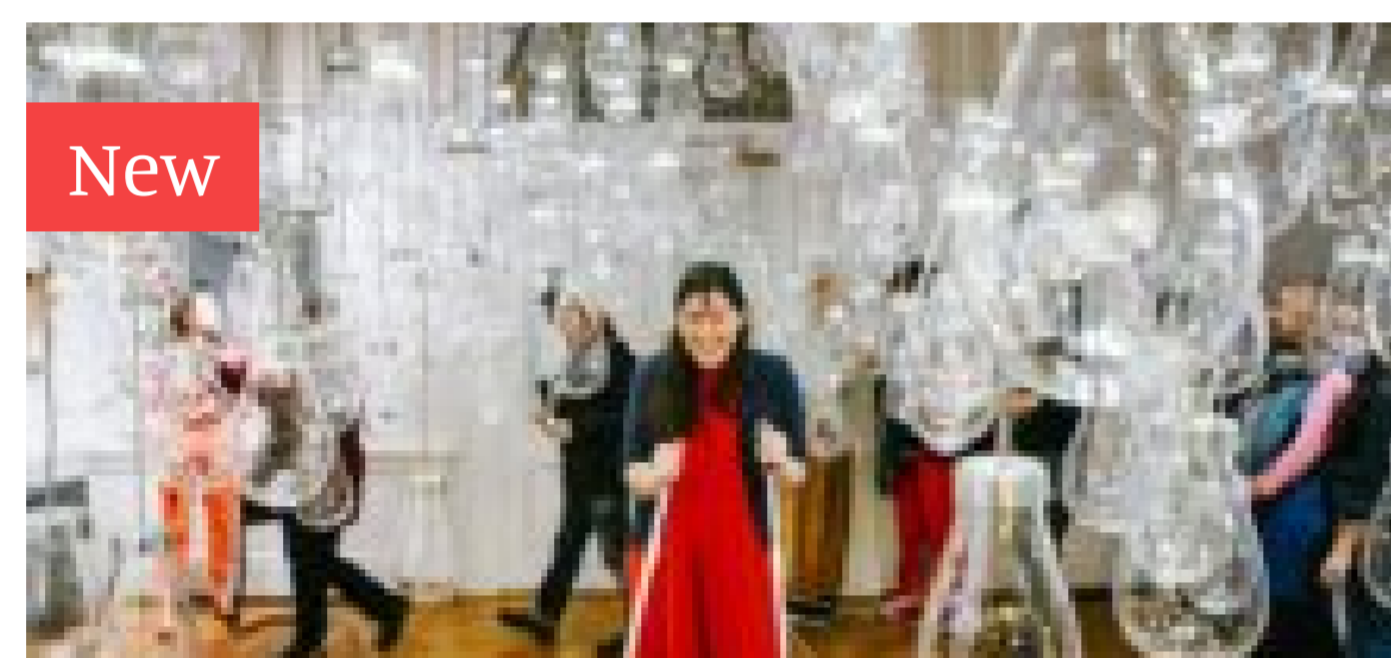
\* [The Future of Out-Of-Home Entertainment](#) – Randy White for Blooloop.com. *Figures quoted relate to the US.*



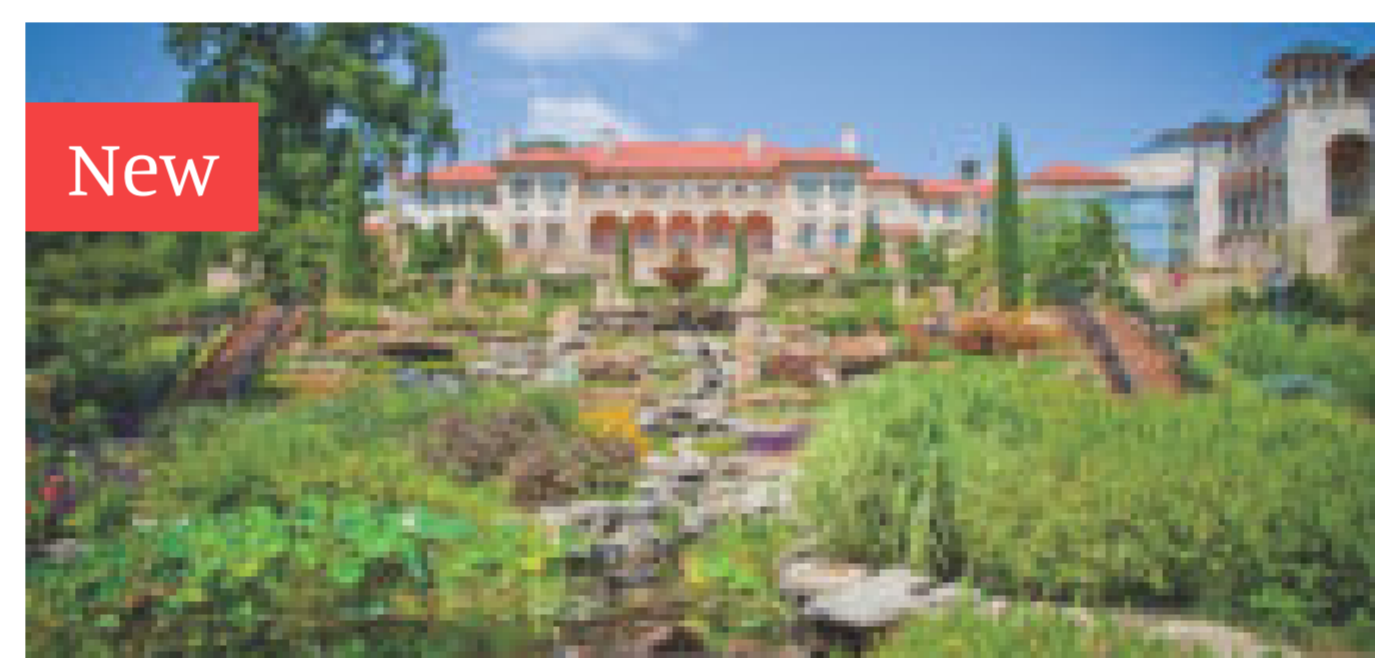
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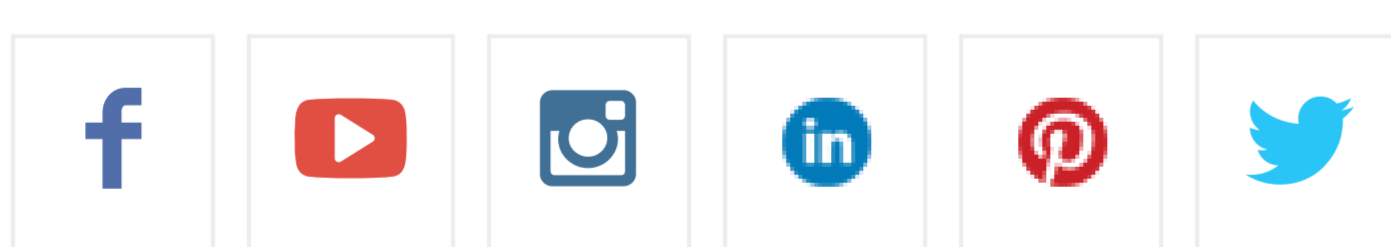
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